

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 EB-07 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

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R 281634Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0604

INFO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, NI, UK

SUBJECT: NIGERIA: PRESIDENT GOWON TO VISIT UK

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH AF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY BLAKE ON APRIL 25, NORMAN ASPIN, ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY AT FCO, SAID NIGERIAN PRESIDENT GOWON WOULD VISIT UK FOR SEVERAL DAYS EARLY IN JUNE. MAIN PURPOSE OF VISIT WILL BE FOR GOWON TO RECEIVE HONORARY DEGREE AT CAMBRIDGE ON JUNE 5 (WHICH IS ALSO REFERENDUM DAY HERE), BUT GOWON WILL ALSO BE SEEING PRIME MINISTER WILSON WHO HAS INVITED HIM TO TROOPING OF COLOR CEREMONY ON QUEEN'S OFFICIAL BIRTHDAY.

2. COMMENT: IMPORTANCE OF UK TRADE AND INVESTMENT IN NIGERIA CONTINUES STRONGLY TO INFLUENCE UK POLICY TOWARD AFRICA. EVER SINCE EARLY SEVENTIES WHEN, THANKS TO NIGERIAN OIL WEALTH, UK TRADE AND INVESTMENT IN BLACK AFRICA BECAME MORE IMPORTANT THAN THEIR ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, BRITISH HAVE TRIED HARD TO REALIZE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO GET CLOSER TO NIGERIANS. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NOT YET SEEN PROGRAM FOR GOWON VISIT, HE SHOULD HAVE NO TROUBLE SEEING ANYONE HE WANTS TO MEET IN GOVERNMENT OR BUSINESS CIRCLES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, ECONOMIC COOPERATION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, HEAD OF GOVERNMENT VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LONDON06382
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750148-1026
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750411/aaaaakpz.tel
Line Count: 62
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 JUN 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <25 JUN 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NIGERIA: PRESIDENT GOWON TO VISIT UK
TAGS: PFOR, NI, UK, (GOWON, YAKUBU), (ASPIN, NORMAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006